

# CrossTalk Author Guidelines

**CROSS TALK** publishes many types of articles that relate to software development. First consideration goes to articles that deal specifically with military efforts, but we also consider articles that deal with government software development or the software industry at large. Typical article categories include, but are not limited to:

- Technical papers.
- Overviews of an emerging or established field.
- Fresh information within a narrow field of interest.
- Opinion pieces for Open Forum.
- Articles from the perspective of people “in the trenches.”
- Tutorials about software engineering methods and concepts.
- Lessons learned.



Be sure to attach all the required elements with your submission and to put them in the proper format. This speeds up the process and will help your article be published as soon as possible.

## Submitting Your Article

Articles should be on paper and diskette (3½” PC) in WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, or ASCII format. Convert any Macintosh files to IBM format on an IBM-formatted disk. Do not submit articles in a page layout format such as FrameMaker or Ventura. You may submit the article by e-mail to [features@stsc1.hill.af.mil](mailto:features@stsc1.hill.af.mil). Call to ensure your submission arrived and was decoded successfully.

Articles tend to average about 3,000 words, and should not exceed 5,000 words, or the equivalent of six **CROSS TALK** pages. Articles should have a working title of six words or less. Authors are encouraged to follow The Associated Press style guide, in keeping with the guide used by the staff when editing the journal.

Include only essential formatting, such as clear section headings and italics.

## Submissions must include the following elements:

### 1. Author Checklist (follows this article)

### 2. Abstract

This two- to four-sentence paragraph summarizes key points in a way that hooks the reader into reading the article.

### 3. Photo

**CROSS TALK** publishes head-and-shoulder shots of authors. The picture should be scannable or in .TIFF format. Scannable photos should measure about 1 1/4 x 1 1/4 inches.

### 4. Author Biography

These should be no longer than 50 to 75 words, outlining the author's job, background, professional accomplishments, and other pertinent accolades or areas of interest.

### 5. Copyrights, Releases

An author who submits an article previously published elsewhere must provide written permission from the journal holding the copyright before **CROSS TALK** will consider reprinting it. A credit line should be included, with the name and date of the previous publisher. Conversely, **CROSS TALK** asks that publications reprinting material from **CROSS TALK** give our journal a credit line.

If an article requires approval from a corporate or government public affairs office or security agency prior to publication, the author must do this before submitting to **CROSS TALK**.

The author is responsible for obtaining any required organizational clearances. Authors retain ownership of their articles printed in **CROSS TALK**.

### 6. Contact Information

The author must include his or her business address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address in the following format:

Author name  
Author's business organization  
Business address  
Voice number  
Fax number  
E-mail address  
Internet address



*The strongest submissions tend to come from authors who first ask their peers to review their articles for content and clarity*

## 7. Notes and References

Most articles require some references, and some contain incidental information best treated as notes. Use brackets for references and superscripts for notes, then list the two groups separately at the end of the article. These should be numbered in the order they appear in the article, **not** alphabetically. Organize references in the following format:

1. Johnson, Milo Z. and Willie W. Wonka, "Software's Sweet Spot: Chocolate in the Bit Bucket," *Whiz-Bang Journal*, Jan. 23, 1997.
2. Wilberforce, Arnold J., Sophia Lockjaw, and Hector Mandibula, *Mastication for the Masses*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1996.
3. McGregor, Ian, "Building Yesterday's Spaghetti-Code Tomorrow," *Proceedings of the Sixth EIEIO Conference on Mainframe Prolongation*, WingDing Press, Baxter, Ark., 1995.

## Figures and Tables

Consider which concepts require visual layout. Charts and figures should be publication-worthy upon submission (sharp, of good contrast, legible, free of clutter, e.g. shadows, lines at least 1p thick). An embedded graphic within a word processing document is usually inadequate. If graphics are embedded, please send them as separate files if possible. Number and name figures and tables appropriately, and indicate where they should be placed in the text. **CROSSTALK** reserves the right to reject graphics that are not production-ready, are redundant to the material, or do not add to the reader's understanding.

## Additional Reading

Our readers appreciate pointers to relevant books and articles. List these at the end of the article in the same format as references.

## Publication Process

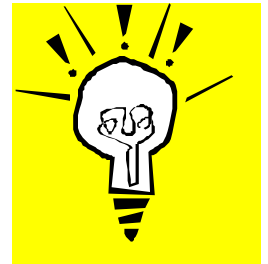
Check the editorial calendar for theme article deadlines, to ensure timely review by the CEB. The following is the process for an article considered for publication in **CROSSTALK**:

1. The article, containing all required elements arrives at **CROSSTALK**.
2. The article is reviewed by the **CROSSTALK** Editorial Board (CEB) and engineers with expertise in the topic area.
3. Within two weeks after the CEB, the author is contacted regarding the article's status:
  - Edit and Publish. The article is ready for editing by the staff.
  - Revise and Publish. The editorial staff receives it only after the author makes specific changes or additions requested by the CEB.
  - Rework and resubmit. Major revisions are needed and the author must resubmit the article to the CEB.
  - Reject.
4. **CROSSTALK** staff edits for style and clarity. The author may be asked to make additional changes or to perform small amounts of additional writing.
5. The author receives an edited copy of the article to proof for accuracy. It is too late, at this point, for authors to make major additions or revisions.

## Letters to the Editor, Open Forum

Limit letters to 250 words. Include your name, phone number, and e-mail address. Names are withheld from publication upon request. We reserve the right to edit for style, length, and content.

Open Forum is for opinion pieces with a nontechnical slant but relating to software engineering. These should be limited to 1,500 words and need not be supplemented with graphical elements. These are subjected to CEB review.



**First make your article useful to your target audience, then make it accessible to people less familiar with the subject's terms and concepts.**

“

*Anybody can have ideas—the difficulty is to express them without squandering a quire of paper on an idea that ought to be reduced to one glittering paragraph.*

”

– Mark Twain

## CROSSTALK STAFF



# **CrossTalk** *Article Submission Checklist*

***Please attach the following to your submission . . .***

*This checklist ensures your submission meets CROSS TALK's basic requirements. Please fill out completely and include it with your submission.*



**Paper Copy**

☐

**Electronic Copy** (on an IBM formatted disk in Word, WordPerfect, or ASCII)

☐

**Abstract** (two- to four-sentence article summary that hooks the reader)

☐

**Author Photo** (head at least one-inch high; see Guidelines for electronic submissions)

☐

**Author Biography** (50-75 word outline of background, accolades, professional interests)

☐

**Contact Information** (address, voice, fax, e-mail and http://)

☐

**Copyrights** (written permission from original publication must accompany all reprints)

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**Releases** (corporate, government, or security approval must be obtained before submission)

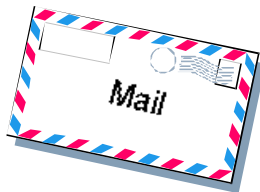
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